

I am sure all of you will agree with me when I say that no Agricultural Society can be complete until it has a Farmers' Club in connection with it. Scotland owes her present high position in Agricultural matters, to her Agricultural Societies and Farmers' Clubs, and the first Farmers' Club that perhaps the world ever saw was established in that country more than a hundred years ago.

It is almost needless for me to say that the proper cultivation of our farms is much neglected, our system is simple and limited in the extreme, we plough our surface, sow our seed, and such a crop as nature gives us we contentedly reap, while it cannot be said that more is done than merely to take advantage of the natural fertility of our soil. It is true that some of us have certain maxims as to the weather and seasons, certain times of the Moon for sowing our Peas, and for killing our hogs, and many other such foolish notions. But how many of us, have but little idea of the value of manure, and the rotation of crops, for we often see manure lying on our field for a whole winter unploughed in, we often see wheat sown after wheat, oats after oats, and pease after pease, and the farmer, instead of procuring at whatever cost the seed most suitable for any particular field, just sowing the kind he can get the easiest or the kind he has most of.

On looking over an Agricultural book a few evenings ago, I could not help contrasting the system pursued by many of us to that pursued in Scot. and more than a hundred years ago. In that country a farmer who farmed 100 acres of land mostly kept the whole of it in some kind of cultivation, at all events, what he tilled had been tilled for years, and what was in grass had been so long in grass that to mow it was next to an impossibility; he had no pasture for his cows and cattle, but they were sent to the neighbouring moors, with some ragged urechin to keep them out of their fields. Their summer fallowing was scratching over a piece of land twice or three times during a summer with a pair of light horses altogether unfit for their work, and those ploughings or scratchings were so few and far between, that a crop of weeds and thistles had time perhaps to come to maturity. Well what was the consequence of such a state of things? It was just this, that the land did not bring  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a crop, the cattle were starved, the horses were unfit for their work, the farmer could not pay his rent, he had not a dollar to pay to an Agricultural Society, nor a half dollar to pay for an Agricultural Book. Now does not that look pretty much like our system here? If our cattle have no moors they have woods to run in, causing a great loss in manure, here many of us keep ploughing and ploughing the same fields year after year, whereas if we would only seed those fields down and plough our old meadows, our crops of hay and grain would both be doubled, many of us also scratch our land instead of ploughing it, and I have often seen our summer fallows with such crops of thistles and weeds on them that they actually looked as if they had been cultivated. Look at our cattle, every year we see them starving and shivering round barns or fences, without

any shelter. and if we have a dollar to pay to an Agricultural Society we have to thank our fruitful soil more than any scientific principle we have ever introduced to increase its natural productivity.

It is obvious then that something is wanted to improve this state of affairs, and it is of the utmost importance now, as respects our present position, and future progress, that we ought to know more of Agricultural science than we do. It is of importance also that we ought to know more of the breeds and forms of different animals and the characteristic qualities of each, the different modes of feeding and rearing them, the economical advantages of each, the most approved rotation of crops, the different machine for abridging labour, and how to apply Mechanical power to the greatest advantage, and how that to be effected—why just by our Farmers Clubs where we can meet and discuss such matters, and bring such knowledge from books and practical experience as will tend to improve us in our Agriculture.

Clubs or Societies such as this, may be said to put each member in possession of the knowledge of all the rest, and to those who have no taste for reading they must prove useful in the extreme; we have resources amongst us we know not of, and resources unknown is money lost.

Look what has been effected in Scotland, look now on that farm which 100 years ago had nothing on it but poor crops, poor cattle, poor horses, poor tenant and poor landlord, look at it now and what do we find? a rich tenant paying perhaps £400 a year rent, a rich landlord encouraging his tenant, and that same farm which formerly could keep nothing but starving stock, sends now hundreds of pounds worth of fat cattle every year to market; on half the land or on 50 acres the farmer now raises double what was formerly raised on the whole 100, while on the other 50 he raises nearly 600 tons of turnips and hay to be converted not only into beef but into manure also, and so highly do they value manure there that it is considered that it alone pays for all the trouble and expense, and that they have the beef for nothing. Let us look nearer home, let us look what has been effected in the neighbourhood of Cobourg, on the same farms where the people who formerly owned them starved and got into debt, we now find tenant farmers paying a heavy rent and getting rich.

I have no doubt that in making these remarks on our system of Agriculture, that many of you have perhaps thought that I was alluding to some of you, but I can assure you that such is not the case, I have seen and can see enough of bad farming on my own farm without bringing up before you anything I have seen wrong in the management of yours; my cows have run in the woods, I have had manure lying all winter in heaps on the field. I once sowed wheat after wheat, and I have committed the most egregious folly of summer fallowing a fine clean piece of sod land, one of the most foolish systems that ever farmers adopted. I also on my summer fallows have seen weeds and thistles large enough to hide a house. I also have had cattle